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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 50th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 118: FINANCING OF THE ACTIVITIES ARISING FROM SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 (1991): UNITED NATIONS IRAQ-KUWAIT OBSERVATION MISSION (continued) (A/49/863)

1. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/863), said that, since the establishment of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), the Security Council had decided to review the question of its termination or continuation as well as its modalities of operation every six months. In October 1994, the Security Council had accepted the Secretary-General's recommendation that UNIKOM should be maintained and had decided to review the question once again by 8 April 1995.

2. As far as the financial arrangements for UNIKOM were concerned, the General Assembly had granted financial authority from 1 November 1994 to 31 March 1995. It was now urgent that the General Assembly should review the financial arrangement from 1 April 1995 onwards. The Secretary-General proposed that, should the Security Council decide to continue UNIKOM beyond 8 April 1995, the General Assembly should grant approval of the amount of $15.6 million net for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995. Two thirds of that amount would be funded from voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait, while one third would be assessed on Member States.

3. As far as the reimbursement of troop costs of the Mission was concerned, full reimbursement had been made up to the period ending January 1995.

4. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's oral report on the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/863), said that, by its resolution 689 (1991), the Security Council had decided to review the question of the termination or continuation of UNIKOM every six months, and that it had decided to review the question by 8 April 1995. Accordingly, the Secretary-General was requesting that the General Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, should make appropriate provision for the expenses of UNIKOM for the period beyond 31 March 1995, should the Security Council decide to continue the Mission.

5. In resolution 48/242, the General Assembly had, as an exceptional measure, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments up to the amount of $5.5 million gross ($5,312,800 net) per month, inclusive of the two-thirds share to be met from voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait, for the maintenance of UNIKOM for the period 1 May to 31 October 1994, one third of the full amount to be assessed among Member States. By the same resolution, the General Assembly had also decided that, on an experimental basis, the Secretary-General could enter into commitments up to the amount of $5.5 million gross ($5,312,800 net) per month, inclusive of the two-thirds share to be met through voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait for the period from 1 November 1994 to 31 March 1995, one third of the full amount to be assessed among Member States.

6. As had been indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the cost for the eight-month period from 1 November 1994 to 30 June 1995 was estimated at $43,718,300 gross ($41,997,500 net), while the cost for the 12-month period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996 was estimated at $63,912,000 gross ($61,298,000 net).

7. In reviewing the Secretary-General's report, the Advisory Committee had recalled that the headquarters of UNIKOM was in Umm Qasr, with liaison offices in Baghdad and Kuwait City and a logistics base at Doha. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the logistics base was in the process of being moved from Doha to facilities in Kuwait City. The Advisory Committee had also been informed that a project to consolidate facilities in the new UNIKOM Support Centre in Kheitan and the Umm Qasr headquarters had been under way since January 1995 and was expected to be completed in July 1995. The Secretary-General's report, however, did not contain comprehensive information on the relocation of the Doha logistics base and the new Support Centre or on the impact of those projects on the various items of expenditure, and the Advisory Committee had therefore requested that such information should be provided to it, including information on the administrative and financial implications of the relocation and facilities at the new Support Centre, so that it could assess the requirements in their totality.

8. On receipt of the necessary information, the Advisory Committee intended to submit its detailed report to the Fifth Committee at its resumed session. Pending that report, and should the Security Council decide to continue UNIKOM beyond 31 March 1995, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should provisionally approve an amount of $12 million net for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995, including the two-thirds amount to be funded from voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait.

9. On that basis, the Secretary-General would be authorized to enter into commitments in an amount of $4 million net, representing one third of the cost of the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995, in addition to the $8 million net to be made available by the Government of Kuwait. In the Advisory Committee's opinion an assessment would not be necessary at the current time in view of the unencumbered balance of $3,369,400 remaining after credit of $7.8 million to Member States.

10. Mr. BOIN (France) said that his delegation regretted the late submission of a report on such an important peace-keeping force and deplored the fact that the Committee was obliged to consider an oral report of the Advisory Committee delivered in English when the Secretariat was duty-bound to issue reports in all six official languages. He wondered whether the Secretariat could explain the reasons for that situation.

11. With regard to the Advisory Committee's report, he sought clarification concerning the relocation of the logistics base from Doha to Kuwait City and on its administrative, operational, financial and budgetary consequences. In that connection, his delegation hoped that a draft resolution could be drawn up by the Committee containing a specific paragraph on the relocation issue and that,

when a report was submitted at the resumed session, it would contain clarifications on all the issues it had raised.

12. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that extensive questions had been asked with respect to the relocation of the Doha logistics base and renovation of the Support Centre when the Secretary-General's report had been discussed. A number of items of expenditure proposed in the report, including some of those concerning premises, equipment under contractual services, and supplies, were related to the relocation of the Doha logistics base and the renovation of the UNIKOM Support Centre. The Advisory Committee had requested detailed information from the Secretariat, which had indicated that it needed to get more information from its field offices. For that reason, the Advisory Committee had decided that it would not be advisable for it to make definitive recommendations in that connection before the additional information it had requested was received from the field. The results of the Advisory Committee's analysis of such information would be reflected in a detailed report which it would be submitting to the Committee.

13. Mr. MENKVELD (Netherlands), referring to the comments made by the representative of France, said that, in his delegation's view, the Secretariat had done an excellent job in complying with the request of the General Assembly set out in paragraph 23 of resolution 48/242. The provisional arrangements recommended by the Advisory Committee should be endorsed by the Committee.

14. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) agreed that the Committee should proceed in accordance with the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

15. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand) said that, while she appreciated the constraints on the Advisory Committee, she regretted that it had been unable to produce a written report and to submit a recommendation with regard to commitment authority for the period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996, as had been requested by the Secretary-General. In that regard, she wondered whether the Fifth Committee would have a report from the Advisory Committee before it when it met in June.

16. Mr. VALENZA (Italy) said that, while his delegation understood the reasons for the late submission of the documents on UNIKOM, it hoped that in future the Secretariat would be able to improve its performance in that regard.

17. Mr. BOIN (France) said he was fully aware that the Secretariat had met the deadline established by General Assembly resolution 48/242. His delegation's regrets related to the fact that the Secretary-General's report had been submitted on the very day it was to be considered. Logically, in view of the way the Fifth Committee was functioning and given the evolution of the Organization's activities, particularly in the area of peace-keeping operations, the Fifth Committee should be a standing committee which would give priority to the speedy and effective consideration of the budgets of peace-keeping operations since there were men in the field who were risking their lives.

18. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), responding to the question concerning the late submission of documentation, said that the Secretariat had been unable to submit

the report before the deadline of 31 March 1995 because it had had to verify and readjust data submitted by its field offices in February 1995. What the Secretariat was seeking was a bridging authority which would allow it to maintain the Mission until the Fifth Committee was in a position to review the budget on the basis of the Advisory Committee's definitive report. With regard to the additional information requested concerning the Support Centre, he said that the project to consolidate facilities in the new UNIKOM Support Centre was being implemented with the generous contribution from the Government of Kuwait. The United Nations contributed office space and equipment and the expenditures under those headings were already included in the budget estimates. Moreover, the relocation would allow savings in the budget.

19. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should take a decision whereby the General Assembly, pending consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, would approve provisionally an amount of $12 million net for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995, including the two-thirds amount to be funded from voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait should the Security Council decide to continue the Mission; and authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount of $4 million net, representing one third of the cost of the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995, in addition to the $8 million net to be made available by the Government of Kuwait.

20. Mr. BOIN (France) said he had understood that two thirds of the financing for UNIKOM came from voluntary contributions and he wondered whether the legal capacity of the Secretary-General to enter into commitments related to the entire sum of $12 million.

21. Mr. KELLY (Ireland) asked why the Advisory Committee had recommended the approval of $12 million for the three-month period from 1 April to 30 June 1995, while the Secretary-General had requested approval of $16.3 million.

22. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the assessed contributions of Member States and the voluntary contribution of the Government of Kuwait were paid into a Special Account and the Secretary-General was authorized to enter into commitments of up to $12 million for UNIKOM for the period from 1 April to 30 June 1995.

23. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had recommended a lower figure for financing the Mission from 1 April to 30 June 1995 (and beyond) out of a reluctance to prejudge the volume of resources it would eventually recommend. That reluctance was based on the fact that the Advisory Committee had yet to receive the detailed information it had requested regarding the logistics base and the Support Centre, and on its experience in connection with previous expenditures. He referred to the Mission's gross expenditure of $58,830,600 (or approximately $4.8 million per month) for the period from 1 November 1993 to 31 October 1994, and the gross cost estimates of $43,718,300 (or approximately $5.5 million per month) and of $63,912,000 (or approximately $5.3 million per month) proposed by the Secretary-General for the eight-month

period from 1 November 1994 to 30 June 1995 and the one-year period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996 respectively. The Advisory Committee wished to know what cost elements in the budget for the period from 1 November 1994 to 30 June 1995 had led to the increase from $4.8 million to $5.5 million in monthly costs. The lower figure was roughly in line with the expenditures made during the period from 1 November 1993 to 31 October 1994. The gross figure of $5.5 million authorized in paragraphs 17 and 18 of General Assembly resolution 48/242 represented a commitment limit. It was only after commitments had been authorized by the General Assembly that the Secretary-General prepared detailed cost estimates setting out the actual amounts required for the specified periods. In most cases, it was discovered that the General Assembly had been generous in its authorizations. For that reason, the Advisory Committee had recommended the figure of $12 million for April, May and June 1995, of which $8 million would be obtained from voluntary contributions.

24. The draft decision suggested by the Chairman was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 162: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION OF OBSERVERS IN TAJIKISTAN (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.42)

25. Mr. KELLY (Ireland), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.42, said that the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was a new Mission, established by the Security Council in December 1994. The General Assembly had therefore made no previous provision for financing it. He drew the Committee's attention to the main provisions of the draft resolution, whereby the General Assembly would endorse the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/49/868); decide to appropriate an amount of $3,251,200 to the Special Account for UNMOT for the period from 16 December 1994 to 26 April 1995; decide also to apportion that amount among Member States; and decide to appropriate an amount of $10,044,200 gross for the continued operation of the Mission for the period from 27 April 1995 to 30 June 1996, that amount to be assessed at a rate of $717,400 gross per month in accordance with the standard peace-keeping scale, subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission beyond the period authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 968 (1994). The general provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/233 covered the financing of the Mission up to 30 June 1996.

26. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.42 was adopted.

27. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand), explaining her delegation's position on the draft resolution which had just been adopted, said that it had been pleased to support start-up financing for UNMOT. It was the first time that the Fifth Committee had taken action under the revolving commitment authority established in section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233; the experience had revealed some practical timing and technical difficulties in the smooth implementation of that important new resolution. The Advisory Committee had made a strict and correct interpretation of when its delegated authority under that resolution should apply. That meant that commitments incurred by the Secretary-General before the Advisory Committee had granted commitment authority had to be covered under General Assembly resolution 48/229 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses relating to the maintenance of peace and security. Her delegation

believed that it was the first time that that resolution had been invoked to cover the start-up costs of a peace-keeping operation; in the past it had been used for the good offices and mediation efforts of the Secretary-General. Her delegation believed that Member States needed to consider whether such a use of the resolution was appropriate and, if so, whether its level of financial authority was sufficient or whether the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/233 should be adjusted so as to take effect immediately upon the establishment or expansion of a peace-keeping operation. Her delegation believed that the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 48/229 and 49/233 should be harmonized and suggested that the issue should be considered when the Fifth Committee next took up agenda item 132.

The meeting was suspended at 4.45 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 128: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN HAITI (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.43)

28. Mr. HAMMARSKJÖLD (Sweden), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.43, drew the Committee's attention to the main operative provisions of the draft resolution concerning the financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), whereby the General Assembly would decide to appropriate to the Special Account a total amount of $5,902,500 gross for the operation of the Mission for the period from 1 August 1994 to 31 January 1995; decide further to appropriate to the Special Account, and to assess, a total amount of $151,545,100 gross for the operation of the Mission for the period from 1 February to 31 July 1995; decide, with regard to the period beyond 31 July 1995, to authorize the Secretary-General, on a provisional basis, to enter into commitments at a monthly rate not to exceed $21,202,240 gross for the three-month period from 1 August to 31 October 1995 in connection with the maintenance of the Mission, the amount of $21,202,240 gross ($20,840,040 net) to be assessed subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission beyond 31 July 1995; and request the Secretary-General, in order to take a decision on the definite amount of expenditure for the period beyond 31 July 1995, to submit budget proposals by the end of August 1995.

29. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.43 was adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.